

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15
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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
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SECDEF WASHDC
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USCINCEUR
CINCUSAREUR
USNMR SHAPE
AMEMBASSY BONN

UNCLAS LONDON 06396

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MPOL UK NATO
SUBJECT: DEBATE ON THE ARMY

REF: LONDON 4843, 5017, 5166

1. THE DEBATE ON THE ARMY WAS OPENED BY GOODHART (A CONSERVATIVE SPOKESMAN ON DEFENSE) AND BROWN (PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE ARMY) REPLIED FOR THE GOVERNMENT. GOODHART ATTACKED THE GOVERNMENT'S DEFENSE POLICY AS ONE BASED ON HOPE--HOPE "THAT THE MEEK SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH" WHILE IGNORING THE EVIDENCE THAT THE STRONG WERE INTENT ON CONTESTING THE WEST'S WILL. GOODHART ARGUED THAT BEFORE BAOR COULD BECOME A FULLY EFFECTIVE FORCE "THERE WOULD HAVE TO BE MASSIVE REINFORCEMENTS" AND HE DEPLORED THE UK'S LIKELY INABILITY TO MAKE THEM SAYING HE THOUGHT "...THE CHANCES OF ONE-THIRD OF THE NECESSARY RESERVES FOR BAOR ACTUALLY GETTING TO THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME MUST BE LESS THAN THE UNCLASSIFIED

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CHANCE THAT RED RUM WILL RUN IN THE GRAND NATIONAL IN 1978 AND 1979." GOODHART EMPHASIZED THE DEFENSE CUTS ALREADY BEING IMPLEMENTED ARE BAD ENOUGH AND IF THE CUTS FOR 1978/79 WERE ALLOWED "...THEN IRREPARABLE HARM WOULD BE DONE TO THE DEFENSE SYSTEM."

2. BROWN SPEAKING FOR THE GOVERNMENT SAID THE PLANNED

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE ARMY IS PROCEEDING WELL AND THAT RECENT TRIALS "TO TEST THE REORGANIZATION HAD YIELDED VALUABLE RESULTS." IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S AIM TO PROVIDE THE MOST MODERN EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE TO THE ARMY. BROWN ASSERTED THAT THE HIGH QUALITY OF ARMY PERSONNEL, EQUIPMENT AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS IS WIDELY RECOGNIZED. BROWN EMPHASIZED THAT THERE WERE NO PLANS TO REDUCE BRITISH FORCES IN GERMANY"...IN ADVANCE OF AN AGREEMENT ON MUTUALLY BALANCED FORCE REDUCTIONS." ON THE MATTER OF BAOR OFFSET HE SAID THE UK AND FRG ARE IN TOUCH "AND BOTH SIDES ARE CONFIDENT THAT IN TIME A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION WOULD BE REACHED."

3. BROWN SAID THAT NEW STUDIES ARE UNDER WAY ON A MBT REPLACEMENT FOR THE CHIEFTAIN IN THE LATE 1980S.

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 20-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
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